



The President's Daily Brief

14 May 1969

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

VIETNAM

Da Nang was hit by heavy rocket fire last night. According to preliminary reports, one rocket landed in a civilian area, killing ten South Vietnamese and wounding 24. Nine other rockets struck military installations, causing apparently minor damage. Shelling attacks elsewhere in the country last night continued at a reduced level.

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In recent days several of the enemy main force regiments that pulled back into base areas in late March have begun returning toward urban centers. It seems likely that these cities will be prime targets for shelling and probing attacks during the current offensive phase. In I Corps two regiments have moved into the lowlands just south of Da Nang, and another regiment has been detected in the immediate vicinity of Quang Ngai city. Northeast of Saigon, one Communist regiment has moved close to Xuan Loc, and in the delta a Viet Cong regiment has shifted to the outskirts of My Tho.

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

We have no solid information to confirm press reports of clashes on the western segment of the Sino-Soviet border earlier this month. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Military transport activity was also at a high level between 3 and 10 May. These developments could be related to border difficulties; they could also simply reflect a military exercise.

If anything happened, we don't believe the incidents were major. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] No alert procedures for Soviet forces have been noted, for example, and there has been no evidence of an increase in border reconnaissance flights.

Both the Soviet Ministry of Defense and the Chinese Embassy in Moscow have denied knowledge of border clashes.

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Early scan of the latest satellite photography shows the start of two new groups of SS-9 ICBM launchers at two of the six complexes for this missile system. Two other complexes were fully photographed but no new silos were seen. The two new groups, with six silos each, will bring the total number of operational SS-9 launchers in the force to 246 by early 1971. Analysis of other photography from this satellite mission is continuing.

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EUROPE

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MIDDLE EAST

There is nothing significant to report.

II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

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MALAYSIA

Tension between the Malay and Chinese communities-- never far from the surface--has boiled over again in the wake of last weekend's general elections. Although the Alliance, composed of Malay, Chinese and Indian parties, retained its parliamentary majority, it received a severe setback. The greatest gains were made by another Chinese organization that patterns itself after Lee Kuan Yew's energetic Singapore party.

The moribund Chinese component of the Alliance, which took the heaviest losses, yesterday announced it will not participate in the cabinet, and the small Indian party may follow suit. This raises the possibility of an all-Malay cabinet, which can only feed Chinese resentment.

A curfew, imposed after yesterday's severe communal rioting, is now in effect in Kuala Lumpur, and precautionary measures have been taken in other parts of the country. It is not yet clear what spark ignited the violence, but Chinese reaction to Malay election celebrations probably was a factor. Although disturbances had lessened at last report, the situation is characterized by a senior police official as still "very grave."

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